consumer news

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
Office of Consumer Affairs
Virginia H. Knauer, Director

Vol. 6, No. 1, Jan. 1, 1976

Recalls

PIMIENTOS.—To avoid a potential health hazard, **Food & Drug Administration** (FDA) has forbidden entry into this country of pimientos packed by 22 foreign companies & has requested 30 recalls of imported canned pimientos since December 1974.

Pimientos are a low-acid food that needs special processing to destroy microorganisms that can produce deadly toxin. As with certain other low-acid foods, pimientos cannot use a high heat treatment to destroy bacterial spores but must use acid, such as citric acid, to prevent bacteria from growing in the can. The problem with the imported pimientos, according to FDA, is that the acid used is not at the right level to assure that harmful bacteria cannot grow. FDA uses the scientific scale of acidity, called the "pH" value, to indicate the acid content of food. A pH value of 4.6 or below means that harmful bacteria cannot grow. FDA found pH values of at least 4.8 in all the recalled brands of pimientos.

Most recent recalls of imported pimientos involved:

- All lots of sweet red pimientos manufactured by Conservas Perla Levantina, Murcia, Spain. Manufacturer canned the following brands: Coloso Sweet Red Pimientos (whole); Coop Quality Pack Sweet Red Pimientos (whole); Grand Union Sweet Red Pimientos (whole); & Pueblo Sweet Red Pimientos. All cans of these pimientos have the foreign registry number R.E. 25.953 on the label.
- All lots of canned pimientos manufactured by John Sexton & Co., Chicago, IL, & packed by Francisco Martinez Lazano, Murcia, Spain. Cans have foreign registry number R.E. 612 on the label.
- All lots of Contesse Brand sweet red pimientos (whole) manufactured by Antonio Serna Fernandez, Murcia, Spain. The cans have foreign registry number R.E. 7.611 on the labels.
- All lots of canned Spanish pimientos (whole, diced, & broken) manufactured by Jose Maria Garcia Gomariz, Murcia, Spain. Manufacturer canned the following brands: Vanco Brand Canned Spanish Pimientos; Roland Whole Red Pimientos; & Dumbar Canned Spanish Pimientos. All cans of these pimientos have the foreign registry number R.E. 26.206 on the labels.

More metric

For a year, CONSUMER NEWS has been translating weights, distances, temperatures & dimensions into metric equivalents. Beginning with this issue, CN will give the metric measurements first & then give U.S. equivalents.

The Metric Conversion Act of 1975 has been signed by President Ford. The President will soon appoint a board to coordinate the voluntary changeover to metric.

About your recent mail

CONSUMER NEWS regrets to report that as a result of mailing mistakes, some consumers may have received notification to attend the wrong White House Regional Conference on Consumer Representation Plans. After conducting an informal survey of subscribers, CN found that mailing errors have resulted in a few consumers being invited to attend meetings in distant cities &/or getting reply cards to be sent back to a city different from the one specified in the notification. This mixup has led to confusion on the part of some CN readers about which conference they can attend & how to inform the proper officials that they will be coming. CN apologizes for these errors.

To end the confusion brought about by these mailing mistakes, CN has checked with officials planning the regional conferences & has found out the following:

- Although you may have received a notification to attend a conference in a distant city, you can attend any—& all—of the 9 regional meetings simply by informing conference officials that you would like to come—or by just showing up.
- If you are particularly interested in a certain consumer problem area, such as energy, you may have received a second notification to attend another regional conference that will focus on that subject. Each regional hearing will concentrate on one of 3 main government operating areas—energy; human resources: & business, finance & agriculture. However, if this meeting is in a distant city, you do not have to travel to that location to register your views. Although the main emphasis of a nearby conference may be on another topic, there will still be Federal officials there representing the agencies responsible for your area of interest & you can communicate your concerns to them.
- If you received a reply card addressed to a city other than listed on your notification, disregard it. If you would like to attend any one of the 9 regional conferences & you do not have the right reply card, simply contact the official (listed below) responsible for that meeting & inform him or her that you will be attending.

To help you plan which conference(s) you would like to participated in, here is the complete list of the 9 regional meetings to be held this month together with the major government agencies participating in each:

Jan. 13 (Chicago)—8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Pick-Staiger Concert, Hall, Northwestern Univ., Evanston, IL
Contact: Carol Morrison (312-353-6790)
Agencies participating: Agriculture Dept. (USDA), Commerce Dept., Defense Dept. (DOD), General Services Administration (GSA), Small Business Administration (SBA), Treasury Dept.

Jan. 14 (Kansas City)—8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Muehlebach Hotel, Kansas City, MO.
Contact: Tony Zahn (816-374-2666)
Agencies participating: Housing & Urban Development Dept. (HUD), Health, Education & Welfare Dept. (HEW), Labor Dept., Veterans Administration (VA), Transportation Dept. (DOT), Justice Dept.

Jan. 16 (Boston)—8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Sheraton Boston Hotel, Boston, MA.
Contact: Frank Prout (617-223-6300)
Agencies participating: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Interior Dept., Federal Energy Administration (FEA), Energy Research & Development Administration (ERDA), State Dept.

Jan. 19 (Atlanta)—8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Stouffer's Atlanta Hotel, Atlanta, GA.
Contact: James Fields (404-526-7526)
Agencies participating: Treasury, DOD, Commerce, SBA, GSA, USDA

Jan. 21 (Houston)—8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
University Center, University of Houston, Houston, TX
Contact: James Evans (713-226-4851)
Agencies participating: EPA, Interior, FEA, ERDA, State

Jan. 23 (Philadelphia)—8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Sheraton Hotel, Philadelphia, PA.
Contact: Joy Wadleigh (215-597-2766)
Agencies participating: HUD, HEW, Labor, VA, DOT, Justice

Jan. 26 (Denver)—8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Brown Palace, Denver, CO.
Contact: Janice Cavaliere (303-234-4215)
Agencies participating: EPA, Interior, FEA, ERDA, State

Jan. 29 (San Francisco)—9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
Crown Quadrangle-Kresge Auditorium, Stanford Law School, Palo Alto, CA.
Contact: Cynthia Gray (414-466-2162)
Agencies participating: Treasury, DOD, Commerce, SBA, GSA, USDA

Jan. 30 (Los Angeles)—8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, CA.
Contact: Frank Terry (213-688-3063)
Agencies participating: HUD, HEW, Labor, VA, DOT, Justice

Consumer News: Vol. 5, part 2: July 1, 1975-Dec. 15, 1975

Below is an index to CONSUMER NEWS & its supplements, CONSUMER REGISTER & RATE REGISTER, for the issues published July 1, 1975, through Dec. 15, 1975

Date & page of the newsletter are given after each subject. "Funerals Sept. 15:1" means an item about funerals appeared on page 1 of Sept. 15 issue of CONSUMER NEWS. Subjects that appeared in the CONSUMER REGISTER or the RATE REGISTER are designated by "CR or RR" before date & page number. "CR Dec 15:2 means page 2 of Dec. 15 issue of CONSUMER REGISTER. "RR Oct 1:1" means page 1 of Oct. 1 issue of RATE REGISTER.

All recalls & warnings are listed only once—under main entries for "Recalls" & "Warnings." All new laws are also listed only once—under "Laws."

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Handicapped meeting

To find solutions to the problems confronting the 35 million Americans with physical or mental handicaps, President Ford has called for a White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals to focus the nation's attention on the needs of handicapped people. Established by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1974, which was signed into law last December the conference will be held in December 1976 & will bring together representatives of more than 50 government agencies as well as representatives of private organizations.

Before the national conference, a series of state conferences will be held to begin developing recommendations that will be considered at the national meeting. If you would like to attend one of these state conferences or would like more information about the national meeting, contact: White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals, Suite 801, 1832 M St., NW, Washington, DC 20007.

Consumer meeting

Consumer Federation of America (CFA) has released the list of speakers for its Consumer Assembly '76 to be held Jan. 21–24 in Washington, DC. The keynoters are: Hubert Humphrey, Edward Kennedy, William Simon, & Ralph Nader. Other speakers are: Lloyd Bentson, Henry Jackson, Morris Udall, Jimmy Carter, Milton Shapp, Terry Sanford & Fred Harris. For more information, write: CFA, 1012 14th St., NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Energy update: Solar

While there is a shortage of several kinds of fuel, there is no shortage of sunlight &, according to **Federal Energy Administration** (FEA), more & more consumers will be looking to the sun for energy to heat their homes. FEA just released a survey that found that in the first 6 months of 1975, production & sales of medium-temperature solar collectors increased at 4 times the rate of 1974. In addition, the number of companies manufacturing these collectors jumped from 39 in 1974 to 69 in the first half of 1975.

A solar collector is the part of a solar heating unit containing air or liquid that absorbs the sun's energy & uses that energy to heat the air or water within the system. The heated air or water is then circulated immediately throughout the home or is stored for future use. Medium-temperature collectors raise the temperature of the air or liquid to about 82° Celsius (180° F).

The survey also found that production of low-temperature collectors, which are used mainly to heat swimming pools, increased by 365% over 1975.

If you are interested in finding out more about the kinds of solar equipment now available, **Energy Research & Development Administration** (ERDA) has compiled a catalog of solar heating & cooling equipment. More than 100 complete systems are listed in the new catalog along with the name of the manufacturer, the manufacturer's description of the product, the product's stage of development & testing, & where to write or call for more information. Specific price information is not included.

To get a copy of catalog, write: ERDA, Technical Information Center, P.O. Box 62, Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

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